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THE MEMORIAL

OF THE

SUBSCRIBERS, CITIZENS OF THE CITY AND COUNTY OF PHILADELPHIA,

RESPECTFULLY SHEWETH:—

That a very large and important portion of your constituents, embracing probably half the population of the United States—the growers of grain—the raisers of sheep—and the manufacturers of woollen goods, are at present in a state of great depression, owing to a combination of untoward circumstances.

In inviting the attention of your honourable bodies to the subject of the present memorial, we find it necessary to take a retrospective view of the state of the farming interest from a remote period, for which we hope the importance of the object in view will sufficiently apologize. We shall be as brief as the nature of the case will admit.

For nearly thirty years after the establishment of our present form of government, farming was almost uniformly as profitable as it is an honourable and useful occupation. The industry of the farmer was stimulated and rewarded by brisk markets, and highly liberal prices. It was, however, apprehended by our wisest statesmen, that a severe reverse would take place, as soon as, by the cessation of war in Europe, the swords of myriads of warlike men, who had been wasteful consumers, would be converted into reaping hooks, and those who had wielded them, into producers. But dearth in that quarter for two or three years, arrested the stroke. In November, 1817, the British ports were closed against our bread-stuffs, but opened for a short time in 1818. From the latter year, the agriculture of Europe has sufficed to feed her population; and our bread-stuffs have accordingly been almost wholly excluded, whereby the prospects of our farmers have been from that time extremely depressed.

It cannot be improper to present a comparative view of the average of our exports of flour, the leading article of the farming states, for three several periods, which will fully explain the causes, and shed light on the great extent, of the depression of the great farming interest.

	Barrels.	Value per Treasurer's Report.
Average of 1811, 12, 13,	1,383,149	\$ 13,980,000
1817, and 1818,	1,318,437	14,664,173
1819, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26,	867,044	4,882,053*

So very extraordinary a diminution of demand for the surplus of the labours of our farmers, and of the value of that surplus, while their numbers in the interim had increased probably forty per cent. and their agricultural skill in nearly an equal ratio, could not fail to produce intense distress. The proceeds of the domestic sales, amounting at least to 10,000,000 of barrels of flour per annum, partook of the same fate. Other farming productions fell in value and demand, in a similar degree. The annual reduction, therefore, of the income of the farmers, by the operation of the European system of exclusion, could not have fallen short of \$ 30,000,000. It may be said, that the prices in the two first periods were too high. This we freely admit. But this circumstance affords no alleviation of the distress resulting from the diminution of demand and the great depreciation, below a price affording an adequate remuneration for labour and the employment of capital. We cannot forbear lamenting that no attempt was made to provide a domestic market, as a substitute for the foreign one, thus ruinously cut off—or any new channel for the employment of the capital and industry thus bereft of their usual occupation and remuneration.

It is scarcely possible duly to appreciate the distress and ruin produced by this state of things among our farmers. Bankruptcy swallowed up a large proportion of them. Lands purchased at fair prices, when the European ports were open, and on which two and three instalments were paid, have been since sacrificed to pay the balance, and found inadequate for the purpose. It has been calculated by men of inquiry, that one-third part of the landed property in the grain-growing states, has changed owners within the last ten years, through the instrumentality of sheriffs and marshals; thousands of our citizens, bereft of large patrimonial estates, have been exiled from home, to encounter the discomforts and privations of new settlements in

the wilderness. Our lands produce far less than they might do—for the stimulus of certain markets and remunerating prices being wanting, husbandry languishes. Numerous cases occur occasionally, of crops remaining unthreshed for a year after the harvest, for want of demand.

From this brief view of the depression of the growers of grain, we wish to call your attention to a sketch of the situation of the growers of wool and the manufacturers of woollen goods.

The restrictive system which began in 1807, and the war of 1812, so far diminished foreign supplies of all kinds of manufactures—and threw out of employment so large a portion of our commercial capital—that many of our enterprising citizens entered with ardour into the pursuit of manufactures, and among the rest, that of woollens. The demand for wool, of course, greatly increased. Flocks of Merino sheep were purchased, and in many cases at very high prices. Before the close of the war the supply of woollen goods was nearly equal to the demand; whereby were secured moderate prices, which, but for that circumstance, would have risen exorbitantly, as foreign woollens were scarce, and supplies precarious. Had the fostering care of the government been extended to this manufacture after the war for a few years, it would have arrived at a maturity that might have enabled it to stand the shock of foreign competition. But the want of adequate protection—the mania for importation—the immoderate quantities of rival articles, brought into our markets, from abroad—prostrated almost every man engaged in the business—reduced hundreds to poverty—threw thousands of operatives out of employment—consigned probably three-fourths of the invaluable breed of merino sheep to the slaughter house—and placed the nation in nearly the same state of dependence on foreign supplies, as before the war.

Within the last ten years, the farmers have been several times flattered, through the enterprise of the manufacturers of woollen goods, with the hope of a revival of the demand for wool, which would greatly tend to alleviate their sufferings. Large flocks of sheep have been accordingly collected at different periods, at great expense—remunerating sales have been made for a year or two—but they have been succeeded by a blight and blast, in consequence of the market for domestic cloth being destroyed by inundations of foreign woollens, sold at the risque and to the loss of the exporters, many times for less than cost, and sometimes for little more than the cost of the raw material. Thus the demand for wool having nearly ceased, the sheep have been destroyed by thousands, as their support became a burden to the proprietors.

The tariff of 1824 afforded a clear demonstration of two important facts—one, that the protection of American manufactures and building up an American system, are clearly recognized as substantial portions of the policy of our national legislature—and the other, that that body seriously intended to protect and foster the important branches, wool-growing and the manufacture of woollen goods. This encouraged our capitalists to enter into both. Investments were made in the latter, in buildings, machinery, and materials, to the amount, it is believed, of \$ 50,000,000, and for some time the prospects were truly flattering. The number of sheep in the United States has been estimated at 15,000,000, which, at two dollars each, amount to \$ 30,000,000, making an aggregate of \$ 80,000,000 invested in those two collateral branches. The fleeces of the sheep, at 3 pounds each, and at 30 cents per pound, would amount annually to \$ 13,500,000.

But it proved in this case, as in many others, that our citizens held their prosperity by the very uncertain tenure of foreign legislation and foreign fluctuations. In the midst of this prosperous career, a tornado burst on both the growers and manufacturers of wool. In consequence of the calamitous scenes in Great Britain in 1825, immense exportations of woollen goods to this country took place, which were, as formerly, sacrificed frequently below cost and charges. With such competition, all struggle is unavailing. The American manufacturer is expelled from his own market—his industry prostrated—and he and his family are doomed to ruin, unless the extent of his capital may enable him to survive the shock, with the sacrifice of all his profits and part of that capital.

* 1826	-	-	-	-	857,820 barrels	-	Value \$ 4,121,466
To Mexico and S. America	-	-	-	-	285,563	-	1,431,178
Former markets	-	-	-	-	572,257	-	\$ 2,690,288

The distress in Great Britain and the excessive exportations of woollens from that country to this, would have been sufficient to produce a great depression in the woollen branch here. But another cause of depression has been brought into operation. The British government, ever wide awake to foster and protect its manufactures, reduced the duty on wool from six pence per pound to one penny, and to a half penny on wool below 1s. per pound. Thus, while the American manufacturer pays, in some instances, a duty of 20 and 25 cents per pound, the British pays but a penny or a halfpenny—whereby nearly the whole benefit intended for the American in 1824, is done away.

It is a melancholy truth, which cannot fail to make a deep impression on your honourable bodies, that the great capital invested in the breed of sheep, and in the establishments for woollen manufactures, has, in consequence of the depression of these branches of industry, depreciated 30, 40, and in many cases 50 per cent.

The following facts may enable your honourable bodies to form some estimate of the importance of the woollen branch. A factory employing 160 hands, (and there are probably 50 or 60 such factories in the United States,) would consume 100,000 pounds of wool per annum. To produce this quantity of wool, would require 35,000 sheep. These would occupy 23,000 acres of land, divided into 115 farms, of 200 acres each; every farm supporting 300 sheep, and a family of six persons, almost entirely devoted to sheep husbandry. It therefore follows, that 50 factories, each with 160 operatives, give employment to 5750 families, and a population of 34,500 persons, who cultivate 1,150,000 acres of land—and it is important to observe that land of inferior quality answers well for sheep grazing.

It is hardly necessary to make any addition to these facts. Yet it may be proper to state, that but for this employment, most of those 34,500 persons, and of the 1,150,000 acres of land, would probably be employed in raising bread-stuffs of various kinds, thus increasing production, and the glut of the markets, and depreciating the price of those articles, already too low to remunerate the capital they employ.

Some imperfect idea may be formed of the beneficial effects of this manufacture on commerce, from the fact, that a single woollen manufacturer in Massachusetts consumed last year, notwithstanding the depression of that branch,

100,000 pounds of wool, equal to 50 tons, of which 40 were imported.

27 tons of dye wood.

13 tons of oil.

2 tons of foreign soap.

A multiplication of this amount by the number of factories in the United States, would produce a most interesting result, as regards the mercantile portion of our citizens.—In fact, there cannot be a doubt, that the freights of the raw materials for this and other manufactures, give full employment to more tonnage than all the dry goods imported into this country.

Your memorialists have learned with great surprise and regret, that associations of their fellow citizens have taken place in different parts of the southern states, by which the power to impose duties on imports is attempted to be confined to the mere purposes of revenue—the exercise of that power for the protection of manufactures is denounced as unconstitutional—the operation of such duties is declared to be oppressive and unequal, and of course unjust—and gloomy predictions are hazarded of retaliation, by restrictions and heavy duties on our cotton and tobacco, on the part of Great Britain, in the event of any increase of duties on manufactures.

The limits of a memorial forbid much discussion on these assumptions, which, we respectfully state, have been so often and so fully disproved, that we could not have expected to be called on at this late period, to offer any arguments against them. We yield, however, to the necessity of the case, although it is but repeating arguments already hackneyed. We shall be very brief; and therefore we barely state, that in the first congress, presided over by the illustrious Washington, and embracing a number of the members of the convention which framed the constitution, who were certainly as well qualified to judge of its intent and meaning, as any persons of the present day—in that congress, we say, there was not a single exception alleged to the measure in question, on the ground of unconstitutionality. The most highly-gifted members of that body not only admitted the right, but in a variety of cases powerfully advocated the exercise of it, as far as the interests of their particular constituents were concerned. Fortunately the debates of that congress are still extant,

and the speeches of Mr. Madison, Mr. Ames, Mr. Clymer, Mr. Fitzsimons, Mr. Carroll, Mr. Wadsworth, Mr. Boudinot, &c. may be consulted on the subject. To this, let us respectfully add, that the preamble of the law for imposing duties on imports, the second passed by that congress, runs, “Whereas it is necessary for the support of government, for the discharge of the debts of the United States, and the ENCOURAGEMENT AND PROTECTION OF MANUFACTURES, that duties be laid on goods, wares, and merchandize imported.”

We beg leave, with all due respect, to state that these facts alone, ought to settle this important question forever. But it is to be observed, that other facts, affording unequivocal corroboration of this construction of the constitution, remain to be stated. This system was distinctly recommended by General Washington, in his speech to congress, at an early period of his career as president, and in his last speech to that body in 1796. Mr. Jefferson, Mr. Madison, and Mr. Monroe, held the same language in their messages. And so late as 1816, Mr. Lowndes, one of the most zealous, intrepid, and enlightened advocates of the rights and interests of the southern states, asserted the same principle clearly and distinctly. We conclude with the fact, of equal force with all the rest, that the practice of the government from 1789 till 1820, has been uniform on the subject, and never, to our knowledge, once questioned till 1824, a period of thirty-one years. And what is now to overrule this mass of testimony? The very strained construction, that *bounties* and *protecting duties*, producing the same result of fostering manufactures, are identically the same—and that the power of congress to grant bounties having been proposed and rejected in convention, protecting duties were by implication likewise rejected! This, we beg leave to state, is fully as illogical as to assert that gypsum, marl, lime, and wood-ashes, are all the same substance, because they all serve to manure the soil.

Duties absolutely prohibitory, were, in 1789, imposed on manufactured tobacco and snuff, six cents per lb. on the former, and ten cents on the latter. But even these high duties were not deemed sufficient to guard the interests of the tobacco planter. They were raised in 1794 to *twenty-two cents on snuff, and ten cents on manufactured tobacco*. Of these exorbitant duties, imposed, not for the sake of revenue, but avowedly for the exclusion of those articles, and to secure to the tobacco planter the entire market of his own country, to the consequent injury of the revenue, the manufacturing portion of the nation never harboured a thought of complaining. We beg leave further to state, that a duty was, in 1789, laid on raw cotton, 150 per cent. higher than the duty on cotton goods, to encourage the culture of that raw material; that a duty was at the same time laid on indigo, to encourage its culture, 200 per cent. higher than on the great mass of manufactured goods; that the duty on brown sugar, an article of great bulk, heavy freight, and in some degree a necessary of life to the poorer classes of society, is from 75 to 100 per cent. which is far higher than any duty on manufactured goods, except coarse cottons; and finally, that, for the encouragement of our navigation, the duty on teas imported in foreign vessels, was, by the tariff of 1789, 125 per cent. higher than on those imported in American vessels. Various other duties for the protection of agriculture and commerce, have been imposed at different times during the progress of our government, for the details of which we refer to the statute books, and which, we repeat, have never been murmured against or complained of by the manufacturing portion of the nation.

We respectfully state, that the objection to the imposition of duties for the protection of manufactures, on the ground of their oppressive tendency, and “taxing the many for the benefit of the few,” is equally ill-founded. In every case, without a single exception, in which efficient protection has been afforded to American manufactures, the result has been to produce an article superior in point of utility, and at a lower price than the imported one. American nails, for instance, subject to a duty of 80 per cent. are sold 40 per cent. cheaper in Philadelphia than in Liverpool. American canvas and window glass are cheaper and better than the imported. The same observation applies to chemical articles generally. Cotton goods are 50 per cent. cheaper and 60 per cent. better than were the imported articles for which they were substituted when the imposition of the square yard duty took place. The enumeration might be extended to a great variety of other articles, but we deem it unnecessary to enter into further detail.

On the subject of retaliation, we beg leave to observe, that as the nations of Europe, because they can supply themselves with bread-stuffs, do actually, in order to pro-

tect their agriculturists, prohibit ours altogether, the cultivation of which forms the chief dependence of 5 or 6,000,000 of our population, the threat of retaliation on their part, held out by our own citizens, should we judge it proper, not to meet positive exclusion by exclusion, but merely to impose additional duties on such articles as our industry can supply, is truly preposterous. Foreign nations are the aggressors. The aggression began and has been continued for years on their part, without an attempt at retaliation on ours. So far as Great Britain is concerned, it is to be observed, that there is a regular annual balance in her favour of from 4 to \$8,000,000. Last year we exported to her only \$21,209,054, and imported \$25,458,975. With respect to tobacco, her entire consumption of the article from all the world, is only 14,000 hogsheads per annum—and our cotton is almost as indispensably necessary to her, as food for her population. The whole amount of our domestic exports to Great Britain and France last year, cotton and tobacco excepted, was, to the former kingdom, \$1,709,122, and to the latter, \$276,797. The tobacco exported to both nations, amounted to only \$3,602,356.

There are important considerations connected with this subject, deeply interesting to such members of your honourable bodies as are engaged in agriculture; more especially, for a reason which will appear in the sequel, to those devoted to the culture of cotton. There is too great a proportion of our citizens employed in agricultural pursuits. At the last census the agriculturists formed 83 per cent of the entire population. The proportion has not decreased since. Hence the demands of the markets, foreign and domestic, do not keep pace with the increase of production. While our means of producing a surplus for exportation are constantly increasing, the foreign markets have been diminishing. So completely and unprecedentedly have they fallen off, that of most of our staples, except cotton, we export less in quantity than we did in 1790, even before the flames of war spread throughout Europe, though our population has nearly trebled since that time, [See table A.] Notwithstanding this reduction of exports, all the markets in the world, into which our produce is received, are almost constantly glutted with it—the demand is slow—the prices reduced—our merchants suffer heavy losses—agriculture languishes—and the resources of the country are blighted by our policy. The average for two years, 1800 and 1801, of the domestic exports of those of our citizens not engaged in the culture of cotton, (about 5,000,000 souls,) was \$35,787,043. The domestic exports of the same description of citizens in 1826, (about 10,000,000,) was \$28,030,448. Thus the melancholy fact appears, that while our population increases in an unexampled ratio, the quantity and value of our exports generally, cotton excepted, decrease. This sufficiently accounts for the occasional depressions of the prosperity of a country possessed of unexampled advantages, and proves the pernicious nature of our policy. A retrospect of a few years will shed strong light on the results of that policy. The extreme depression of manufactures from 1816 to 1822, drove thousands and tens of thousands of manufacturers to farming. Thus was that branch of industry overstocked by the conversion of so many customers into rivals.

Submitting the premises to the serious consideration of your honourable bodies, your memorialists pray you will afford such relief as the pressing necessity of the case requires.

September 20, 1827.

Hence thousands of acres, where the climate and soil permitted, were converted from tillage and pasturage into cotton and tobacco plantations. The planting of tobacco was soon overstocked—and cotton was substituted for that article. Hence the enormous increase of the export of cotton, notwithstanding the great and steady increase of the domestic consumption. The export of upland cotton was more than doubled in four years from 1819 to 1823. In the former year it was 80,013,843 lbs. and in the latter, 161,586,582 lbs. And the proceeds of the latter quantity fell short of those of the former. Nothing can more incontrovertibly prove the utter impolicy of our system, as regards the southern states, than this obvious and pernicious result of depressing manufactures and farming, and thus unduly increasing the production of cotton. To this source may be fairly traced the ruinous reduction of the price of that valuable staple, and all the depression that has prevailed for years in the cotton-growing states.

Total export and proceeds of Sea Island and Upland Cotton for 1819 and 1823.

1819	-	-	lbs. 87,997,045	-	-	\$ 21,081,763
1823	-	-	173,723,270	-	-	20,445,520

A candid view of the preceding facts, will satisfy every unbiased mind, that the conversion of 150,000 cultivators of cotton into farmers—and of double the number of farmers into mechanics and manufacturers, would produce the most salutary effects on the general prosperity of the country, to an incalculable extent.

Here we respectfully close the arguments in favour of the system we advocate, with the hope that our facts and inductions will irresistibly prove the soundness of the maxim of Adam Smith, that “*whatever tends to diminish in any country, the number of artificers and manufacturers, tends to diminish the home market, the most important of all markets for the rude produce of the land, and thereby still further to discourage agriculture.*” And hence it clearly follows, that it is the interest of the agriculturists to increase the number of artificers and manufacturers, in order “to increase the home market.”

Besides the growers of wool, and the manufacturers of woollen goods, there are various other descriptions of our fellow citizens, whose case requires further legislative protection. Instead of any enumeration on our part, we respectfully refer to the recommendations of the Harrisburg Convention, which will be submitted to your consideration, and which we fully approve.

(A.)

Exports from the United States of Flour, Wheat, &c. for 1790 and 1826.

		1790.	1826.	Increase.	Decrease.
Flour	barrels	724,623	857,820	123,197	
Wheat	bushels	1,124,456	45,166		1,079,290
Indian corn	bushels	2,102,137	505,381		1,596,756
Shingles	No.	67,331,115	71,991,000	4,660,885	
Tobacco	hhds.	118,460	64,098		54,362
Staves	feet	36,402,301	28,193,000		8,209,301
Rice	tierces	100,845	111,063	10,218	
Indigo	lbs.	612,119	5,289		606,830
Naval stores	bbls.	122,777	96,157		26,620
Spirits	galls.	370,331	212,970		157,361

The following Memorial is circulating for signature
in the City of New York, &c.

Mr Peter For-





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